

A Study of how the Protagonists of Films Suitable for Cinema Therapy Sessions with Students Addresses His Emotional or Psychological Issues: A Case Study of Young Orion from the Film Orion and the Dark

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ABSTRACT

The protagonists of films have a key role to play in taking forward the plots of the films. This is due to the reason that the stories of the films always revolve around them. In addition to this, the obstacles and the enemies they face play a key role in both the progression of the stories and also of their personal character arcs.

Sometimes, the character arcs of the protagonists sometimes also change throughout the films, correcting their flaws and evolving into better persons. These arcs are called as morally ascending character arcs. Such types of arcs are important for films to be chosen for cinema therapy. This is due to the reason as these types of characters who successfully manage their emotional and psychological problems, can be easily related to by the students or clients. They also play a key role in aiding in their successful recovery from emotional and psychological issues. This study will be analysing the development of the character arc of the protagonist young Orion from the film Orion and the Dark . It would also study how the change in his character arc relate to him solving his emotional and psychological issues, which are similar to those faced by the students or clients in cinema therapy. This study utilises a mixed methodology of a case study approach and the methodology of qualitative content analysis based on the 12 stages of a Hero's Arc Journey according to Christopher Vogler. The results of the study found that the film depicted young Orion overcoming his emotional or psychological issues in a very gradual and realistic way which could be related to by the school going children watching the film for cinema therapy.

Keywords: Cinema Therapy, Character Arcs, Christopher Vogler, The Writer's Journey and Orion and the Dark

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A STUDY OF HOW A PROTAGONIST OF A FILM USED IN CINEMATHERAPY SESSIONS ADDRESSES HIS EMOTIONAL OR PSYCHOLOGICAL ISSUES: A CASE STUDY OF YOUNG ORION FROM THE FILM ORION AND THE DARK

Everyone likes to watch and enjoy films a lot. They also sometimes relate to the characters, events and plots of the films due to various reasons. They also sometimes imagine them being in the characters' shoes and facing the same problems or being in the same situations as the latter. Cinema therapy uses these aspects of the audience enjoying and relating to the characters and the plots of films to help them to use films as a tool to manage and overcome psychological or emotional issues and enhance their emotional wellbeing.

Cinema therapy sessions are carried out professionally in countries such as the USA. There are also various

cinema therapy studies carried out as a part of the research in cinema therapy. The basic idea of cinema therapy starts with the psychologists or researchers choosing a film which depicts characters overcoming psychological or emotional issues in a realistic way, which are similar to those faced by the clients. Then the researcher or therapist watch the whole film or edited portions of the film together (with the clients or subjects). Sometimes, the clients are asked sometimes to watch them as homework, note their feelings and observations while watching it and come for the next session in the professional practice of cinematherapy, by the therapists.

Then after the film screening, the researchers or psychologists discuss with their subjects or the clients about what can they learn from the films and the characters to overcome their emotional or psychological issues and enhance their wellbeing. They also discuss about how to apply it in their lives. The researchers are currently conducting cinema therapy sessions for the school children in schools across Tamil Nadu as a part of their ICSSR Project and studying about how cinema therapy could help the students to improve their emotional and psychological wellbeing.

A list of suitable films for cinema therapy sessions for children was prepared and finalized based on the emotional and psychological issues faced by the children, as depicted in the film and the grade levels of children suitable for viewing the films. One of such films is 2024 film Orion and the Dark, which is about how a young boy Orion who is afraid of many things including the dark and eventually overcomes his fear when Dark comes to him one night. He also offers Orion to take him on a trip in the night, during which Orion would observe Dark doing his duty. Dark tells him that observing him doing his duty would help Orion to overcome his fear of the dark.

The film was directed by Sean Charmatz and written by Charlie Kauffman. It was adapted from the book “Orion and the Dark” written by Emma Yarlett. It was chosen as a suitable film for cinema therapy sessions for children as it fulfilled the following criteria for films to be used in cinema therapy. It was also chosen due to the reason that it was also recommended by the creative art organization Doctor Drama in Mumbai, on their post in their Instagram account as animated films which educates about mental health.

The criteria for films to be used in cinema therapy sessions were:

The film should offer hope.

The film should lead a person to feel motivated or improve themselves.

The film should lead the viewers to think about their psychological health and issues and they should also make the viewers to think about how would they manage similar situations as depicted in the movies. (Shelton, 2024).

In addition to this, the film was also chosen as the lead protagonist Orion during his childhood has a morally ascending arc as he experiences a positive transformation throughout the film while overcoming his fear and other issues. Thus, this would inspire the students to overcome fear and other emotional or psychological issues like him, while watching the film for cinema therapy sessions.

A morally ascending character arc is one of the three types of character arcs in literature and film and the other two types of character arcs are: flat character arcs and morally descending character arcs. The term “character arc” is defined as the indication “of how a character changes over time” and it also has a start and an end. Characters with flat character arcs do not undergo any drastic changes in their personalities through the course of the films. They always retain their personality traits and values while encountering conflicts throughout the films.

A morally descending character arc is associated with the characters in films or literature who regress from a good situation to a worse situation throughout their stories and they also have some major flaws. A morally ascending character arc is always associated with character development and growth. Protagonists having this type of character arc tend to face some obstacles and problems in their life and learns some key lessons about life or about themselves. Then, they address and corrects their flaws and change for the better. A key

component of the morally ascending character arc is the protagonists managing and overcoming problems. These types of character arcs are marked by positive growth and development.

The Importance of Character Arcs in Cinema Therapy

The concept of character arc also plays a key role in cinema therapy as psychologists or therapists who conduct cinema therapy sessions or have written books about it, recommend that films featuring morally ascending character arcs to be watched by clients to help them to solve their problems.

This is due to the reason that when clients watch films having these types of characters who successfully overcome their problems, during cinema therapy, it helps them to solve their emotional or psychological issues. They become inspired by the reel characters addressing and overcoming their problems successfully. Reel characters are often written and created with character traits and issues similar to real life people. Thus, seeing these characters successfully solving mental health issues in films, can inspire the latter to address and solve their mental health issues too.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Film Studies and Character Arcs

Wong and Achin (2020) in their study, stated that narrative arcs of the films are established through the events which happen during the course of the films and explained that the plot of a film indicates the individual events which make up the narratives of the films. They also noted that the inability of the viewers to comprehend the cause and effect aspects of the film characters, lead to them facing problems in comprehending the plots of films.

They also stated that the obstacles and problems faced by the characters in the stories of the films constitute part of the character arcs. To make sure that these arcs are designed and written well, the 12-phase Hero's Journey is employed to emphasize the integration of the aspects of the events in the story with the rest of the plot of the films. They also noted that the character arc structure of Vogler's narrative model can form captivating stories.

Merta et. al (2022) in their study cited Henderson (2006) who said that films provided various purposes and took on various roles towards the enhancement of the "twentieth century culture". They also said about the vital characters in films, that they "drive plot, draw in perusers sympathy (or abhorring) and carry your story along" and they also said the vital character of films are the pivots of the plots of the stories about them and they are vital skills of the writers or authors.

Muthalib et.al (2023) in their study about the characterizations of the characters in the film *Turning Red*, cited Bennet(2004) whom observed that there was an everlasting bond between the study of literary works and films and they also defined characters as those who emerge in various forms of literature such as stories, plays and movies and they are also known as "the actors" of the story".

They also stated Nurgiantoro (2010) stated that there are two characteristics which characters have which are: protagonist and antagonist. He also stated there are some "intrinsic elements" of the films which are "the plot, theme, setting, point of view, characters and characterization". They also cited Baldick (2011) and Inayah et. al (2022) definition of characterization as "the presence of characters in a work of fiction" which enables the readers to deduce their character traits from their words and actions. In the conclusion of their research study who noted that, their study emphasizes the vital role of character analysis in revealing the complex changes and development which characters experience through the whole course of the films.

Ramadhan et. al (2023) in their study about the development of the main character in the film *The King of Staten Island*, cited Petrie and Boggs (2012) who said that novels, short stories and films share many similar aspects. (Ramadhan et. al, 2023). They also stated Forster's definition of character development.

They also explained about how Truby (2008) in his book, explained about the importance of main characters in stories as they are the most pivotal roles in the stories as the stories are focused around them. In addition to this, they also encourage others to step forward and resolve the issues and problems. They also have their own intentions and wishes but they also have some flaws which prevent them from achieving their wishes and goals.

Ramadhan et. al (2023) also stated Eder et. al (2010)'s definition of characterization as "the process to provide a character with certain properties such as the mind, behavior, and their relations to the social environment". They also stated that how Elder et. al (2023) stated that there were two different types of characterization which are direct and indirect. Direct characterization involves the mentioning of the direct labelling of the character traits of the characters while the indirect characterization involves the deduction of the traits and personalities of the characters from their speech, action and looks.

Character Arcs and Cinema Therapy

Marsick (2009) from the USA, also explained about how it was vital to focus on "relationships and character development and change" while watching films for cinema therapy while "viewers focus on a plot" while watching films for entertainment. She also quoted Hesley and Hesley and their criteria for selecting films for cinema therapy which were: "effective role models, content matches therapy issues, enjoyed by clients, characters solve problems, messages are indirect and uplifting or inspirational moods are elicited".

She, based on the findings of her study, also introduced a new term: filial cinema therapy. She defined it as "a child and parent watching films or television together at home or in a therapy session to initiate dialogue about family or developmental issues with which a child is struggling" (Marsick, 2009).

She also explained about the benefits of filial cinematherapy such as "helping parents learn more about their children's thoughts and concerns; helping children develop socio-emotional skills; assisting parents in communicating their own thoughts and guidance to their children in the context of the characters and plot, and lead to an enhanced relationship between child and parent." (Marsick, 2009).

Buskirk (2017) from the USA, also stated that connecting to a movie character not only reduces isolation by exhibiting challenges shared by a child, but can also provide a virtual agent to tap into the child's past experiences. This can stimulate the child's memory processing and can ultimately bring forth previously unconscious traumatic memories.

He has also stated that animated films are the preferred films to be used for cinema therapy sessions with children as they promote "abstract thinking and metaphorical discussion by providing a fictitious and augmented reality."

Sendikici (2011) from Turkey, also stated that "Discussing and analyzing thoughts, actions and motives of the characters in movies can supply patients to discover various unconscious thoughts." He also stated that while using films during psychotherapy, self-awareness is mostly implemented through making connections between films and "patients". He also cited Solomon (2001) who said that several clients derive a lot of benefits from viewing themselves in the characters and plots of the films.

He also cited and explained about how Haas (1995) who said that discussing character traits about characters in films experiencing similar, can make patients to assess "their strengths" and weaknesses. He also said that while cognitive insights acquired from films make clients "to take action", affective insights motivate them to execute "their plans" and they can also provide a substitute for "actions and plans". Sendikici (2011) stated that films create understanding about problems by making clients "to change their way of thinking, or reframe the situation".

Sendikici (2011) also explained about how films and film characters are embodied by patients while being used in psychotherapy sessions by stating that after "the film and characters are internalized by clients, they begin to help patients both during and after therapy. Movies act as cues of insights; resolutions and useful emotions emerged; and characters become co-therapists whose wisdom can be applied to new situations clients

may face". He also noted that some patients get so influenced by watching some films consisting of characters meeting their needs, they would want to take the necessary action immediately and thus further elaboration of the films for cinema therapy sessions will not do any harm.

Abedin and Molaie (2010) from Iran, in their study of the use of group cinema therapy on the parental stress reduction of mothers of children with mild mental retardation, said that movies can be used as a medium for self-exploration and through them, clients may identify with his chosen heroes in the film and ensuing analysis of character behaviors, needs, and drives.

They also stated that "The characters in movie model a set of behaviors that can help client solve his/ her problems. Equipped with various lenses, movies can be effective in modifying observer's cognition, attitude, and behavior. By stimulating emotions and changing levels of Neuroandrophins and stress hormones, movies also bind biological effects."

Rimonda et. al (2022) from Indonesia, in their study about using cinema therapy counselling with students with social anxiety disorder, said that "Cinematherapy is a therapy technique to foster individuals to become aware and able to overcome real-life problems, carried out by reflecting and discussing characters, language styles, or archetypes in films". They also stated that the participants in the study were very enthusiastic about the cinema therapy counselling activities and they participated in all of the cinema therapy counselling sessions and they also understood their social anxiety problems and also what causes social anxiety.

Pilyugina and Suleymanov (2023) from Romania, in their study of using cinema therapy in correction of a personality defence in adolescents, stated that movies based on absurdity had a greater positive impact in psychological defence of adolescents than movies based on heroism. This was due to the problems and obstacles faced by the characters in the later types of films illustrated the dangers of the world to the participants in the study and thus increased psychological defences such as "dissociation and repression (psychotic mechanisms)" and decrease of other defences such as "suppression and anticipation (adaptative mechanisms)". Viewing movies based on absurdity had the following positive effects on the participants such as "increase of the inner freedom of the test subjects and the more positive perception of themselves and the world around".

They had also stated that comparing the experiments based on movies based on heroism as compared to the movies based on absurdity, it was found out that it was more effective in using films in which characters had tolerated defeats, to lower the anxiety and also to increase the self-esteem of the participants in the study.

De Los Reyes (2023) from the Philippines, also cited Sharp et.al (2002) who said "cinematherapy is not just watching films but requires an in – depth understanding of the films metaphors," and "the characters portrayed in the film." Most importantly, he also stated that cinema therapy can be used as "an standalone intervention" and it also has therapeutic benefits and it is meant to help people during problems and crisis. He also called cinema therapy as "self-medication".

The existing literature about cinema therapy also reiterates the importance of the nature and type of characters in the film being shown in cinema therapy sessions or studies. They also explain about how the research subjects relate to the characters facing similar emotional or psychological issues successfully.

This highlights the importance of how the characters should be in the films selected for the cinema therapy and how they should change for the better by solving their mental health issues; thus inspiring the patients to do the same.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The aim of this study is to study and analyse the evolution of the character arc of the protagonist young Orion from the film Orion and The Dark. It also seeks to study how young Orion overcomes his fears and other emotional or psychological issues during the course of the film. The objectives of this study are:

To study how young Orion is depicted and characterized.

To study how young Orion changes during the course of the film.

To study and analyse how young Orion addresses and resolve his fears and other emotional or psychological issues during the course of the film as he changes.

THEORETICALFRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework of this paper will be the “Hero’s Arc Journey”, which consists of twelve steps, which was highlighted and explained in detail by Christopher Vogler in his book, *The Writer’s Journey*. Vogler has explained about the stages which are usually encountered by protagonists in films, on their way to growth success during their lives in the films. The twelve stages of the journeys of the protagonists according to Vogler are:

The Ordinary World-The protagonists are introduced in such a manner that the audience can relate with them sympathetically. They are feeling uneasy or not aware of themselves. They are also portrayed in the backdrop of their personal lives and the environment in which they live.

The Call to Adventure-Something has happened in the lives of the protagonists and is disrupting the situation in which they live. So they must face the emergence of the resultant changes.

Refusal of the Call: The protagonists is scared of the unfamiliar things or environment and tries to flee from them but only for a short period of time. This fear may also be voiced by the other characters in the films.

Meeting with the Mentor: The protagonists meet with a very experienced person who has known about the new place in depth. He or she offers them guidance, advice or motivation for them to successfully complete their journeys or tasks in this new world.

Crossing the Threshold: This stage happens at the end of the Act 1 in the films. The protagonists decide to leave their worlds and enter whole-heartedly into the new worlds.

Tests, Allies and Enemies: The protagonists face several tests and becomes fully committed to the new world and also to their new adventures or tasks in these new worlds.

Approach: The protagonists and their friends make preparations for the big ordeal or tasks in the new worlds.

The Ordeal: This stage occurs in the middle of the plots of the films and the protagonists enter into a unique position in the new worlds. They also encounter death or their biggest fears.

Reward: The protagonists take the rewards by facing their biggest fears. Although there might be happiness and jubilation in this context, there is also the problem of losing the rewards.

The Road Back: At this stage, the protagonists is motivated to complete their adventures or challenges and leaving the new worlds to ensure that the rewards are brought back home.

The Resurrection: This stage takes place at the climax of the films. In this stage, the protagonists face their greatest tests or ordeals in their homes. They are also refined by sacrifices and also instances of “death and rebirth” (Jones, n.d.). Most importantly, this stage marks the resolution of the conflicts.

Return with the Elixir: The protagonists come back home and carries the rewards which they have acquired and they have also been transformed.

STUDY METHOD

This study has adopted a mixed methodology of a case study and qualitative content analysis, based on the concept of *The Hero’s Journey* to analyse the character arc of the protagonist young Orion. He was analysed

based on his characterization, his emotional or psychological issues, the stages of the Hero's Journey in his lives throughout the film and how did he solve his emotional or psychological issues.

The character arc of the protagonist young Orion from the film Orion and the Dark was chosen for the purpose of this case study as the film was one of the films selected by the researchers to be screened for the cinema therapy session for the school children as a part of their ICSSR project. It was also chosen as it also depicts young Orion as a kid facing fears and other emotional issues and it also depicts him receiving guidance from a school counsellor about his fear. This could be related to by the school going children who watch this film for cinema therapy sessions.

The character arc of young Orion was chosen for analysis for this study as although the film has both the characters of Orion as an adult and Orion as a kid, the latter character has a bigger role in the story than the grown-up Orion, who narrates the story about him as a small boy to his daughter. In addition to this, the younger version of the protagonist is also a lead character who experiences a change and positive growth in his character arc through the course of the film.

The researchers first watched the film and they studied and observed the change of the character arc of young Orion. Then, the journey of how he solved his emotional and psychological issues through the course of the film was also studied and analysed. The researchers watched the film as a Tamil dubbed version downloaded from the Internet.

Then, Orion's personality and his character traits along with his emotional or psychological problems was studied and analysed. Then, his character arc and the change and development of his character arc throughout the film were outlined and explained in detail with the help of The Hero's Journey. It was also explained about how the stages of The Hero's Journey occurred in young Orion's life throughout the film. Additionally, the manner in which young Orion solved his emotional or psychological issues and enhanced his emotional or psychological wellbeing through the course of the film was also explained.

ANALYSIS

The results of the content analysis of the character arcs of the young Orion is as follows:

The film is told as a story of an adult Orion to his daughter Hypatia about how he as a young kid overcame his fears and it is also told by Hypatia after she grows up, to her son Tycho. Young Orion, in the story narrated by adult Orion and adult Hypatia, is a fair skinned boy who has neatly combed his hair and is dressed in a red and grey shirt with some lines of green. He is seen carrying his sketchbook and his lunch.

Stages of the Hero's Journey:

The Ordinary World-Orion is a boy studying in school with fear and dislike of several things such as mobile phones, bees and cats. In order for him to deal with his problem of fear, the school counsellor had told him to express his fears in some ways. So Orion keeps a sketchbook in which he draws and writes about his fears and dislikes. Orion is also very afraid to go to a field trip to the planetarium as it might lead to an accident.

Orion's father tells him to go to the field trip and his mother also advises **having fears is normal but he (Orion) should not let the fear prevent him from enjoying his life . She also adds although he might be afraid of something sometimes, he should go ahead and do it.**

Although Orion realizes that his parents are trying to help him to overcome his fear, he does not agree with their advice.

The Call to Adventure-Orion's biggest fear is of the Dark. Although he requests his parents to narrate a story to him, they refuse and ask him to sleep in his room. Orion tells them to leave his bedroom door open. As the lights in his room goes off, Orion becomes scared and starts berating the darkness. This infuriates Dark and he appears as a large person, dressed in a black cap and hood.

He also tells that he couldn't stand Orion constantly scolding and shouting at him. When Orion tells him that he is not real and tries to chase him, Dark becomes fed up. He also says that human beings think of him in weird ways and also tells that he is real. Then Orion apologizes to him for his fear of him and says that he cannot be scared of anyone by taking out the permission slip for the field trip which his father had signed.

Dark also tells him that he made a correct decision. He asks Orion to come and observe him doing his duty for one night so that he would not be afraid of him.

Refusal of the Call: However, Orion refuses Dark's offer and Dark then frowns; saying how would Orion agree to his idea. Then he vanishes away; saying if Orion wants to spend the rest of his life being afraid, then it is his decision.

Meeting with the Mentor: Then, after Dark had vanished, the pages documenting Orion's various fears flies in the air and also flashes in his mind. Then Orion becomes fed up and he shouts, saying that he agrees to Dark's idea.

Crossing the Threshold: Then, Dark appears again with a smile and says that he knew that Orion would agree to his idea. Then he says to Orion that they should shake his hands with each other in order to make it official. Orion, although still scared of Dark; shakes hands with him. Then, both of them fly out of his house.

Orion makes his first gradual steps of overcoming his fear by saying that he does not want to be afraid anymore and he agrees to travel with Dark for one night. This is due to the reason of him observing Dark doing his job during the trip, so that he would not be afraid of him. He also finally shakes hands with Dark.

Tests, Allies and Enemies: During their trip, Dark tries to make Orion appreciate the beauty of the night by making him to see things such as fireworks. However, Orion refuses by saying that he is afraid and allergic of fireflies. Then when Dark accidentally drops him from the sky while making him to open his eyes to see the fireworks, Orion becomes angry. He then asks Dark when would he take him home.

Dark tells that he would take him after 24 hours due to the day and night cycle. Although Orion insists on going home, he eventually rescinds on his decision as his home was very far.

Dark then introduces him to the other entities such as Sleep, Dreams, Unexplained noises and Insomnia. However, they are not happy to see Orion due to his fear of the darkness and tell Dark that he must make sure that Orion does not interfere with their jobs.

Orion faces a huge problem when he suddenly thinks of the bully Richie Panici, who is afraid of, while Dreams is doing her work in a woman's mind. Then a big Richie Panici comes and this turns into a huge problem for Orion as the former attempts to kill him.

However, Orion manages to escape from him by thinking that his school would be flooded and Dark rescues him. After this, Dark points out a key emotional problem of Orion: he is either very creative or very disturbed. He tries to console Orion by telling that he has overcome his fears by fighting against them.

However, Orion is not convinced. However, he admits that he is not afraid of Dark when the latter asks him about that. Then, both of them become very happy.

Approach: Orion realizes that he is not afraid of Dark anymore and then starts to travel around with him. **This marks a crucial stage in his process of overcoming his fears as Orion is no longer afraid of Dark or also judgemental about the other night entities performing their duties.** Orion now touches the water in the ocean and even dips into it bravely. He also helps the other night entities to perform their duties successfully. Thus, his relationship with all the night entities and Dark has improved.

The Ordeal: While Orion and Dark are travelling, they hear a small boy telling his mother that he is afraid of Dark and also does not like it. When they stop to have tea along with the night entities, Dark becomes very sad

about this but Orion tells him to not to care about what the boy had said without proper knowledge. He also adds that he also was like the boy and also that the boy was just afraid. He also thanks Dark for bringing him on this journey and also making him to realize that there is more to the night time.

When they about to leave, they see Light coming and Dark frowns as he does not like him. However, Orion says that he likes Light as he makes him feel like being wrapped up in a blanket.

Then when Orion is afraid to enter into a dark house. the night entities ask him about it. However, Orion hides his fear and instead tells them that he likes the daytime and also explains about the beautiful things that it offers. He also adds that they would have to experience daytime for them to appreciate these things.

The night entities also start appreciating daytime.

However, Dark becomes angry and Orion's attempt through a speech to make things up does not work well, as he indirectly asserts his judgemental attitude when he says that Dark is not vibrant and bright as Light.

Then the night entities announce that they are quitting to experience daytime. Dark also becomes dejected and waits for Light to come for him to vanish, as he tells Orion that only he is remaining in the night time. He also says that also no one likes him. Thus, Dark vanishes completely when Light arrives.

Reward: After Dark vanishes completely, the film shifts back to the present where adult Orion and his daughter Hypatia arrive at the planetarium where Orion is working. When Hypatia asks him about the rest of the story, Orion replies that he does not know about it. Then Hypatia tells him that she has an idea about how to continue the story and Orion asks her to proceed. Hypatia tells that she wished that they could be friends when they were of the same age. Thus, she appears in the story and introduces herself to young Orion.

When Orion tells her about how he spoiled many things, **this indicates that Orion has finally overcome his judgemental mindset, another emotional problem which he has been facing.**

Hypatia also says that she knows his issues and she has been following his story. She explains that without night, people would not be able to sleep and thus face problems. Orion tells her that they cannot allow this to happen and Hypatia then reciting a poem explaining about the good qualities of Dark.

When she finishes it , the night entities (who are not happy with the daytime), come back and praise her for her poem.

The Road Back: When Sleep tells that they need to bring the night back, Orion replies to her that Dark is gone and they cannot create night without him. However Hypatia tells that Dark is alive in Orion's memory. She then requests the help of Dreams to access Orion's memories and also the help of the other night entities to bring back Dark.

However, Orion points that it is not good to place such a huge and vital task in the hands of a boy who has "severe performance anxiety". However, Hypatia assures him that she will always be with him. Then as Orion goes to sleep, Dreams and Hypatia enters into his mind and says that they would have to go into the deep corners of his mind.

Then they see the night when he first meets Dark. When Dark says that Orion came back for him, Orion agrees with him as Dark is his friend.

The Resurrection: Then Orion gets shocked as they get sucked slowly into a black hole in his room. When he asks Dreams about it, she replies that it is there in his brain and only he could stop it. When

Hypatia tells him to go there and pull Dark out of it, a scared Orion asks her about what will happen.

Hypatia also is not sure **and tells that feeling afraid is a part of life and he would have to feel the fear.** Then Orion tells himself that he must do it anyway.

Then he goes into the hole and tries to rescue Dark, while Dreams and Hypatia try to pull them from the hole.

When Hypatia tells Dreams that the cloth which they are using for pulling them are not enough, Dreams goes back to Orion's conscious mind and tells the other entities to wake Orion up now. Then Quiet absorbs all the noises and wakes him up by telling him that he would miss his field trip if he does not wake up. Then Orion wakes up and Dark is restored successfully again. **This marks the pivotal moment in Orion's life as he finally faces and overcomes all his fears successfully.**

Return with the Elixir: Then Dark congratulates Orion for his work and Light also acknowledges that it was nice to have Dark back. The night entities acknowledge that Dark is the best and resume their work. Then Dark leaves Orion and Hypatia at Orion's house. Orion thanks Dark for changing his perspective about the darkness. However, Dark also thanks him for seeing him in the way that Orion sees him and **says that a lot depends on how others view them.** When Dark asks Orion about if he wants to go to the field trip tomorrow, Orion says that he will. Dark also asks if he feels scared, Orion says that he is terrified but he still will go for the field trip. Then Dark says that everything will be alright. Before Orion leaves, he runs back and hugs Orion. After some time, a kid named Tycho drops back Hypatia home on his time machine.

CONCLUSION

This study aims to analyse the characterization of young Orion the protagonist of the film Orion and the Dark , the evolution of his character arc and also how did he tackle his emotional or psychological issues through the course of the film. It is an attempt which combines perspectives from psychology (cinema therapy) and film studies(the concept of The Hero's Journey) to analyse how could films be useful for children as a source of therapy to solve their emotional and psychological issues.

The findings of the study reveal that the film depicted young Orion's emotional issues like anxiety and his problem of fears very realistically and also the process of him overcoming these issues in a gradual and realistic way. The film depicted that he gradually learnt to overcome his fears and other issues during his trip in the night with Dark (although the idea is fantastical) and is constantly exposed to his fears. Then, he overcomes his fears through constant exposure, understanding and guidance from Dark and Hypatia.

Interestingly, young Orion also faced some obstacles while overcoming his fears such as Dark completely going away due to the reason of the other night entities leaving him and wanting to experience the daytime. This made the former very anxious and his fear resurfaced again. However, due to the guidance of Hypatia and the help of the other Night entities, he gathered courage, overcame his fear completely forever and once again revived Dark.

The manner of portrayal of Orion's fears and his emotional issues and how he overcame them in a gradual manner in the film, would be relatable by the school going kids. This is due to the reason as some of his fears are also likely to be experienced by kids such as of bees and the manner in which he overcame his fears in the film illustrates the point that overcoming fear and other issues sometimes cannot be done immediately.

Sometimes, it is a long process and the film also emphasizes receiving importance of the advice and support from family members and other mentors in this process.

The scene in which the stage Meeting With the Mentor stage of the Hero's Journey in the film came from internally from young Orion's mind (frustration with his fears) to make them to make him to accept Dark's offer of going on a trip with him to help to overcome his fear of the Dark. This also illustrates that change in the lives of the people to help them solve their emotional and psychological issues comes from within their minds sometimes.

The film also follows a plot line of young Orion facing emotional or psychological issues being in his home and natural world in the beginning of the film. Then he became involved in an adventure (his trip with the Dark) and he gradually and successfully overcoming his emotional and psychological and other issues. Then

he eventually and successfully returned home. This plotline is similar to the usual commercial films. This trend could be analysed and studied in further research.

Thus, the film could be suitable for school students from the grade levels of Grade 9-12 to help them to overcome their fears and other emotional or psychological issues or children within the same age group as the school students in the above-mentioned age group. This is due to the issue that the film portrays Orion receiving guidance from the school counsellor about his problem of fear (this is a mental health perspective of addressing the issue) and also due to the structure of the film (story within a story) which can be understood effectively by the school students from Grade 9-12.

However, this study also has its limitations. Its limitations include that only a single film was considered for this case study and also that only the childhood version of a protagonist of the film was considered. Another limitation is that the film analysed in this case study was an animated film. Another limitation is that as this film was only selected as suitable to be shown to school students in schools in Tamil Nadu as a part of their cinema therapy sessions and was not yet screened for them in the cinema therapy sessions, qualitative reflections among the students from the schools in various districts in Tamil Nadu could not be considered. Future research could involve analysing supporting and other characters from films facing and overcoming a variety of emotional and psychological issues in the films. In addition to this, a variety of films including drama films etc which can be or are already used in cinema therapy could also be analysed in future research.

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